

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 /072 W

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R 101320Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4817

INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 26364

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, FR

SUBJECT: THE NEW BARRE CABINET -- REACTIONS FROM THE  
CENTER

REF: PARIS 25059

1. AFTER INITIAL EXPRESSIONS OF SATISFACTION AT THE  
NEW BARRE CABINET, THE CENTRISTS (CENTRE DES DEMOCRATES  
SOCIAUX -- CDS) ARE BEGINNING TO EXPRESS RESERVATIONS  
AS THEY EXAMINE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CABINET CHANGE  
MORE CLOSELY. FROM HAVING HAD TWO MINISTERIAL POSTS IN  
THE CHIRAC CABINET (ANDRE FOSSET AS MINISTER FOR THE  
QUALITY OF LIFE AND JEAN LECANUET AS MINISTER OF JUS-  
TICE), THEY NOW HAVE ONLY ONE, IN THE PERSON OF LECANUET,  
WHOM THEY FEEL HAS BEEN "DEMOTED" TO AN INFERIOR MINIS-  
TRY. IN ADDITION THEY HAVE SEEN THEIR RIVALS (FOR BEING  
STAR OF THE REFORMIST CATEGORY), THE RADICAL SOCIALISTS,  
(WHO, TOGETHER WITH THE CENTRISTS, COME UNDER THE BROA-  
DER HEADING OF REFORMISTS) INCREASE IN PRESTIGE FROM ONE  
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MINISTER AND THREE STATE SECRETARIES IN THE CHIRAC CABI-

NET TO THREE MINISTERS AND ONE STATE SECRETARY IN THE CURRENT ONE.

2. THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE CDS MET ON SEPTEMBER 8 TO DISCUSS THESE AND OTHER PROBLEMS. ALTHOUGH THE PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED AT THE CLOSE OF THIS MEETING DOES NOT REVEAL CENTRIST DISPLEASURE PER SE, IT IS REPORTED THAT DURING THE MEETING A NUMBER OF PARTY LEADERS -- JACQUES BARROT, PIERRE ABELIN, ANDRE DILIGENT AND OTHERS -- EXPRESSED STRONG RESERVES AT THE SLIGHTING THEY FEEL THEY RECEIVED FROM GISCARD IN THE CABINET SHAKEUP. ALTHOUGH OUTGOING MINISTER FOSSET WAS RECEIVED AT THE ELYSEE ON THE SAME DAY, WHERE GISCARD EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT HE HAD BEEN DROPPED FROM HIS POST ONLY FOR REASONS OF "POLITICAL EQUILIBRIUM" IN THE NEW CABINET, MANY CENTRISTS DO NOT ACCEPT THIS "APOLOGY". IN ADDITION THEY FEEL THAT LECANUET WAS USED BY PONIATOWSKI TO DRIVE CHIRAC OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT. THEY REFER BACK TO LECANUET'S CALL AT THE RENNES CDS CONFERENCE LAST MAY (PARIS 15492) WHERE LECANUET CALLED FOR AN ELECTORAL UNION OF THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS AND THE CDS. AT THE TIME THIS CALL WAS WARMLY RECEIVED BY MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR PONIATOWSKI, AND EVERYONE'S INTERPRETATION WAS THAT THE GAULLISTS HAD BEEN THE MAIN TARGET. NOW, HOWEVER, SUCH AN ELECTORAL UNION APPEARS OUT OF THE QUESTION IN VIEW OF WHAT THE CDS INTERPRET AS GISCARD'S OPEN DOOR POLICY TOWARDS THE CDS' ARCH-ENEMY, THE GAULLIST BARONS. IN ADDITION, THEY LOOK UPON RADICAL SOCIALIST PIERRE BROUSSE AS HARDLY THE MAN WHO WILL FACILITATE GISCARD'S AIM OF BROADENING THE MAJORITY TOWARDS THE CENTER LEFT.

3. COMMENT: THE CDS HAS REASON UP TO A POINT TO FEEL SLIGHTED BY THE NEW CABINET SHAKEUP. AS STATED PARA 4 REFTTEL, THE RADICAL SOCIALISTS REPRESENT THE ELEMENT OF THE MAJORITY CLOSEST TO THOSE MODERATE FACTIONS OF THE OPPOSITION THAT THE PRESIDENT WISHES TO ATTRACT, AND IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY FOR THIS REASON THAT THE RADICAL SOCIALISTS WHO RECEIVED LESS THAN 5 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE IN LAST MARCH'S CANTONAL ELECTIONS HOLD NO LESS THAN 11 PERCENT OF THE POSTS IN THE CURRENT CABINET.

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WHILE THERE IS FOR THE TIME BEING NO QUESTION OF THE CDS MOVING INTO SOME KIND OF OPPOSITION, A CERTAIN GLOW IN THE RELATIONSHIP WITH GISCARD HAS BEGUN TO DIM.  
RUSH

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NNN

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